The Melody of Life

by

Lydia Avery Coonley Ward

California
egional
acility

THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

Mr. Hoffman

Lydia Avery Coonley Ward

1922

Lydia Avery Coonley Ward

MELODY OF LIFE

These little books that lost
their way
Are here at last—
please let them stay.

Lydia Avery Coonley Ward

THE MELODY OF LIFE

BY

LYDIA AVERY COONLEY WARD

The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

PSALMS

NEW YORK
JAMES T. WHITE & CO.
1921

Copyrighted 1921 by
JAMES T. WHITE & CO

PS
3545
W19 m

TO

THE MEMORY

OF

JOHN C. COONLEY

623912

PREFACE

MRS. Coonley Ward's ample and beautiful house on the Lake Shore in Chicago was for many years a center where people interested in social questions came for discussion, meeting those who were dedicated to the service of the Arts. From the very first opening of its hospitable doors, when the guests were the masons and the carpenters who had built the house and the other workmen who had decorated its walls and installed its organ, its atmosphere was one of complete democracy, as if the hostess refused to divide life into compartments, and was moreover heeding that old injunction of Thomas à Kempis: "Inquire not who spoke this or that but attend to what is spoken."

The dispenser of this constant and inclusive hospitality not only gave a public hearing to the enthusiastic promoter of a new social experiment or to the struggling artist who had not yet found his opportunity, but many times supplemented her sympathetic understanding with financial backing. This was always given with a sense on the part of the beneficiary that the donor shared his vision and enthusiasm, and the artist came into a larger expression and into a freer environment without any modification of his point of view or lowering of his standard.

Mrs. Coonley Ward not only "learned from life," to use Dante's fine phrase, but constantly moved forward into a fuller and freer world. Her poems record her experiences in this unending journey where she retained a spontaneity and tenderness of the heart, a certain elasticity, and a spirit of adventure, which is too often confined to youth. She makes us grateful once more as to one who penetrates "Our earthly dullness with the beam of stars."

JANE ADDAMS

Hull-House, Chicago

CONTENTS

HEREDITY 1
ASPIRATION 2
MY NEIGHBOR 3
JOY 4
APPRECIATION 5
TODAY 6
THE VISION 7
WAIT 8
WORK 9
LOOK UP 10
HOSPITALITY 11
MAHOMET'S CHOICE 12
UNFORFEITED 13
THOUGHTS 14
ALONE 15
FEAR NOT 16
RESPONSIBILITY 17
REPOSE 18
FORGET 19
TRUTH AND ERROR 20
RICHES 21
ANGER AND WORRY 22

Behind the Deed 23
Resist the Devil 24
Peace 25
As a Man Thinketh 26
Heritage 27
Index 28
By These Tokens 29
The Real King 30
January 31
February 32
March 34
April 35
May 36
June 37
July 38
August 39
September 41
October 42
November 43
December 44
Dawn 46
O Beautiful Day 47
Spring 48
My Wish 50
Apple Blossoms 51
Spring's Largess 52
Rose Secrets 54
My Crab Apple Tree 56
Heartsease 57
Prophecy 58
Gorse 59
Parting Summer 60
Oriole 61
Aster and Goldenrod 62

Autumn 63
The Brook 64
The Spring 65
Transition 66
The Forest Samson 67
Indian Summer 68
Renascence 69
The Prairie 70
Blue and Gold 71
The Boom of the Lake 72
Cremation 73
To a Malachite Geode 74
Nostalgia 75
The Tear Jar 76
The Sunflower Hedge 78
Firelight 79
Loneliness 80
Eternal Youth 81
Foundlings 82
Song of the Ship 83
To an Ancient Glass Vase 84
Rosedale's Old Floor 86
The Lady Barbara 88
Lord Roslyn 90
Shakespeare 91
Shakespeare's April 94
Lincoln's Wish 95
Guarded 96
"Savoir Tout C'est Pardonner Tout" 97
Crinan Canal 98
Windermere 99
The Roofs of Antwerp 100
Echo Mountain 102
Saint Cloud 103

Coronado 104
Give the Best 105
The New Year 106
Easter 108
Easter Lily 110
Thanksgiving Song 111
Thanksgiving Day 112
Love's Evergreen 113
Possession 114
Prayer 115
Hymns 116
Church Bells 118
To Correggio's Madonna 119
Ninetieth Psalm 120
True Religion 122
Song of Labor 123
Achievement 124
Song of Work 125
Brotherhood 126
Labor Song 127
Message of the Flag 128
After Seneca 131
Quartrains 139
Proverbs 143

THE MELODY OF LIFE

My little book, your lines were born
In rifts of busy times;
No travail pains of solitude
Brought forth these simple rhymes.
They have no plan, no moral hid,
No prize for one who delves;
They came from out a happy heart
And seemed to sing themselves.

HEREDITY

WHY bowest thou, O soul of mine,
  Crushed by ancestral sin?
Thou hast a noble heritage
  That bids thee victory win.

The tainted past may bring forth flowers
  As blossomed Aaron's rod;
No legacy of sin annuls
  Heredity from God.

ASPIRATION

Ask not for life of ease, but ask
  From strength to strength to grow;
Pray not to measure out your task
  By powers the past may show;
But ask for powers to meet demands,
  For love that knows no strife,—
For crystal vision, tireless hands,—
  A better self for life.

MY NEIGHBOR

Tell me the good of my neighbor,
  Make me his lover;
What there is evil, unaided
  I shall discover.
Better might I to his failings
  Know only blindness,
For they may surely be hidden
  Under his kindness.
Then over errors and weakness
  Draw me a cover;
Tell me the good of my neighbor,
  Make me his lover.

JOY

SWEET Joy on earth is seeking
To find a happy home;
He cares not if to palace
Or cottage he shall come.
He looks in heart of peasant,
He looks in heart of king;
To those who joy are giving
Sweet Joy himself will bring,
And by their hearts' warm firesides
Will sit and smile and sing.

APPRECIATION

Did you think the story splendid?
Did you laugh or did you weep?
Ere the writer's life is ended
And his restless heart asleep,
Give him your appreciation—
Written line or spoken word—
It may bring new inspiration,
A new courage may be stirred.

Did you think the picture glowing
With the spirit genius gives?
Tell the artist he is showing
That his cherished vision lives.
It may be his thoughts are turning
To despair from hope deferred;
Just your voice may meet his yearning—
Courage spring from just your word.

Not to every one is given
Message of the brush or pen;
But the artist who has striven
Draws new strength from fellow men.
Cast not pearls of praise too lightly,
Nor repress them; for—who knows?—
They may turn, though even slightly,
All the world from gray to rose.

TODAY

WHY fear tomorrow, timid heart?
Why tread the future's way?
We only need to do our part
Today, dear child, today.

The past is written. Close the book
On pages sad and gay;
Within the future do not look,
But live today—today!

'Tis this one hour that God has given;
His *now* we must obey;
And it will make our earth his heaven
To live today—today.

THE VISION

She walked along a stony way;
Up-hill her path the long, long day;
By sharp thorns were her garments torn;
And yet she smiled from night to morn.

She did not know the hill was long;
Her bleeding feet stepped true and strong;
Her hand unshrinking clasped each thorn,
And called it rose, of heaven born.

Because—because there went before
A dream that brightened evermore.
She saw the vision of the light,
She felt no pain, she knew no night.

WAIT

All Nature waits the appointed hour,
The seed to start, the bud to flower;
But man, impatient, hurries on
To lose the cause that might be won.

Calm wisdom ever counsels, Wait!
Time solves the problem of the State;
When seed of righteous cause is sown,
Trust time to show its flower full-blown.

WORK

I AM enamored of work!
It calls to me in my dreams;
It wakens me out of sleep
Saying: "Nothing is as it seems
Except work—work that has blessing for you,
The work that you only can do.
Arise, O you dreamer, arise!
Be glad of your good right hand,
Be glad that your body is strong,
For the work that is calling is good,
It is work that the great world needs.
Your own work is calling to you."
I laugh as I hasten to rise,—
Who am I that I dare to shirk!
I am called by a voice from the skies
Singing, "Child of the ages—work!"

LOOK UP

Why should'st thou misfortune fear,
O soul of mine,
When it may never venture near,
Or shape define?
The body faints beneath a load
It need not bear;
Look up! The stars shine on life's road,—
Stoop not to fear.

HOSPITALITY

It is not hospitality
That bids our friends to revelry.
Its high ideal we rather find
In open portals of the mind,
And corners to opinions free
With which our own do not agree.

He who his invitation sends
To enemies, will find them friends;
And differing, will still discern
That each from each has much to learn.

Then swing the portals of the mind,
See quickly good, to ill be blind;
All other welcomes are as naught
To hospitality of thought,
And the sweet privilege is not lost
Of being guests with God for host.

MAHOMET'S CHOICE

"If I had but two loaves of bread,"
Mahomet said,
"I would sell one that I might buy
Sweet hyacinths to satisfy
My hungry soul."

Great Oriental! Prophet wise!
You taught each one of us who fain
By body's dole
Would feed the soul,
That it is gain
When hyacinths he buys,
E'en though he sacrifice
His loaf of bread.

UNFORFEITED

It might have been! It might have been!
The keynote of sharp sorrow!
Yet is the present hour my own,
And it may claim tomorrow.
Whate'er I might have been, I yet
May be, for God is willing.
The past and future break their chains
When *Now* with hope is thrilling.

THOUGHTS

Our thoughts are angels following those we love;
Sometimes 'neath shadowy clouds they slowly move,
Burdened with care, with anxious fear weighed down,
They carry fetters rather than a crown.
Again they soar the mountain heights above
On happy wings of joy and peace and love.
Laden with hope they lift the weight of care
And courage takes the place of dull despair.

Ah! dear ones all, forgive me when I send
A thought to you that is not born a friend!

ALONE

I sit upon a mountain,
  No human soul is near;
The forests are beside me,
  They are companions dear;
The gray stones give me greeting,
  Each white cloud smiling sends
Glad message for our meeting,—
  I am with friends.

I walk the thronging city,
  And countless moving hordes
Of people press against me;
  I hear their very words,
I look upon their faces,
  My heart can only moan,—
In all these crowded places
  I am alone.

FEAR NOT

Fear not because you do not see
The right victorious and free;
Its foes will surely turn and flee,
Their hosts will count minority;
For God and one must ever be
A conquering majority.

RESPONSIBILITY

EACH man is judge at his own bar
  Receiving sentence there,
Each man is his own ancestor
  And each his own first heir.

God sends all good and says—Hold fast!
  To himself give I man,
His heritage is his own past,
  His future his own plan.

REPOSE

When you lie down at night to sleep
Take off the garments worn by day,
And do not force your soul to keep
Her thought-robes on. Lay all away.
Then shall your rest untroubled be,
As the repose of infancy.

FORGET

With curling lip and flashing eye,
  With heart that quicker beat
She said an angry word—but why,
  Oh, why, that word repeat?

What myriad words we all may say,
  And wish we had been dumb
Before the angry tides allowed
  Those passion-signs to come!

Not yours or mine the stoic's calm,
  The smile, the well-ruled tongue,
That leaves no room for deep remorse,
  Or tears by heart-ache wrung.

Ah, happy we with loving friend
  To listen and forget,
Who would not breathe again the words
  That our own hearts regret.

TRUTH AND ERROR

TRUTH and error side by side
In one mind cannot abide.
When truth enters error goes,
Pain, disease, and all life's woes.
Strong and joyous is the soul
Under harmony's control.
And today, serene and wise,
We may make earth Paradise.

RICHES

Rob me of my flocks and gold,
  Stranger, if you will;
Rob me of my jewels old,
Pictures rare and books untold,
  Field and stream and hill;

Take all these, if you but leave
  Courage of the soul,
Faith and hope that wrongs retrieve,
Joy and love that love receive;
Rich in these I shall not grieve
  For the wealth you stole.

ANGER AND WORRY

Anger and worry are two fiends
  Resolved to poison and annoy;
They undermine the springs of health,
  And dry the fountain-head of joy.

Life is a burden when they rule—
  But let brave head and heart unite
To hurl these despots from their throne
  And set thereon the powers of right,

And straightway evil tides are turned;
  We are God's own—He takes control;
The fiends are banished—right prevails
  And health and joy rule in the soul.

BEHIND THE DEED

"Why should I work? Why should I strive?
The world is wrong," you say and sigh;
"My drop of good is swept away
By tides of evil rising high!"

Ah, no! The beat of every heart
That throbs for right is felt afar;
Each kindly deed, each joyful gift,
Speeds hope and courage like a star.

The spirit stands behind the deed,
In holy thought the dream must start;
And every cause that moves the world
Was born within a single heart.

RESIST THE DEVIL

RESIST the devil, he will flee;
  He hides within thy breast;
What is he but the ill-used force
  That will not let thee rest?

He tortures, he afflicts, he goads,
  His scepter is a sting;
He sits enthroned till thou resist,
  Then flees—and thou art king.

PEACE

My heart was once a weary thing,
  My heart was worn and sad,
And now it can but laugh and sing
  For it is ever glad.

Life's problems still confront the soul,
  Life's trials still make plaint;
Yet my heart sees a shining goal
  And never more can faint.

The world obeys a heavenly plan,—
  'Tis God who rules—not sin;
I see the angel in the man
  And all is peace within.

AS A MAN THINKETH

"As a man thinketh, so is he."
  Right thought builds true and strong;
Let passion rule, and he is torn
  By forces turned to wrong.

For evil poisons. Malice-shafts
  Like boomerangs return,
Inflicting wounds that will not heal
  While rage and anger burn.

But good may ever conquer ill,
  Health walk where pain has trod;
"As a man thinketh, so is he."
  Rise then, and think with God!

HERITAGE

THOUGH we may kneel whene'er we pray,
We are not aliens at bay.
We are not strangers kept afar
By frowning face and heavy bar.
We are not worms from out the dust
Unworthy of a father's trust.
No! we are God's own children dear,
We love Him and we do not fear.
He is a king, and princes we,
Inheritors of royalty.
His wealth for us He freely spends,
To us His heavenly crown descends.
Our birthright we have but to claim
For He has sealed it with our name.

THE face is index of the soul,
  Thoughts set a record there;
Man fain would blot the evil out
  By mask he tries to wear.
But all in vain! Though he may lie,
  With Nature's every breath
The truth is told. The face reveals
  The soul in life and death.

BY THESE TOKENS

I SAW her in a tenement,
With her surroundings well content;
Her matted hair, her ragged dress
Told their own tale of idleness.

Yet shabby gown and tangled hair
She must perforce as symbols wear,
Because they signify control
By rags and tatters of the soul.

THE REAL KING

It is not the ruler who sits on a throne,
And calls lordly acres and palace his own,
Who really is king of the land and the sea,
And worthy of praises from you and from me.

'Tis he who can give all the love that they ask
To dear ones, yet bravely encounter his task;
Can smile on his neighbor with message of cheer
And carry a light heart howe'er dark the year.

'Tis he of gay voice and he of strong hand
Who truly is king of the sea and the land,
He reigns over hearts that in homage bow down
And yield love and praises this hero to crown.

JANUARY

THE light of Spring is on the hills,
  The breath of Spring is in the air;
With golden sap the willow fills—
  And yet Spring will not hither fare,
    While yet 'tis January.

Full well I know bleak winds will sweep
  The hills when Winter's king commands;
And snow will yet lie white and deep
  Where now in shallow drifts it stands—
    For this is January.

And yet, and yet I hear a voice
  Fragrant with promise of the May—
The voice of Spring, and I rejoice,
  And sing this little roundelay—
    Though this is January.

FEBRUARY

PAN'S pipes are laid in roots and twigs,
And through the vines are bent;
Spring comes with eager lips to press
The wondrous instrument.

To hear this heavenly symphony,
Rise, Soul, from depths of woe!
Speak, Seer, and make me wise as flowers
Who well their birthdays know!

Tell me how Pan makes sun, wind, clouds
Obedient to his power!
Tell me why green fills every leaf
And color every flower!

O wise man! break a stem, and show
The marvelous liquid green!—
A violet's heart, that I may watch
Its purple-flowing stream!

Show me the pink-filled fountain where
Arbutus goes to drink!
Show me the snows that come to pale
The lily on its brink!

Then, O thou wisest man! distill,
If thou hast secret power—
That I may learn the magic art—
The perfume of the flower!

And tell me why the violet's breath
  The lily never knows!
And why the lily's never dwells
  Within the glowing rose!

Yet, Sage, speak not! These secrets, hid
  In flower, in leaf, in sod,
Half-fathomed by our human hope,
  Must still be left with God.

MARCH

THE shortest days, the darkest days, are past;
The dawn comes early to the eastern skies;
The morning's brightness floods the world at last;
Joy welcomes the new day with glad surprise;
And Nature sings, with sky and lake in tune—
"On, on to June!"

O heart, for thee the darkness lies behind;
The golden sunshine warms thy life anew;
Joy with each new day's dawning thou dost find
Gilding gray skies and rippling in the blue.
Thou too dost sing, with sky and lake in tune—
"On, on to June!"

APRIL

I LEANED from my window one morning
I heard a low laugh in the air;
The birds gave a soft note of warning—
A moment, and she will be there!
Oh, who is this charmer retreating,
As if our desire she eludes?
Her raindrops, our plans all defeating.
Are pattering down in the woods.

I watch her—the beautiful maiden!
The sun brings her wandering smile;
The breeze with her whisper is laden,
The willows her favor beguile.
Her veil of gray mist on the mountains,
Her scarf of pale green o'er the trees;
She breaks all the chains of the fountains,
They rush down to seek the far seas.

Her jewels she brings from a palace
Well guarded by knights of the sun;
She weeps, and they offer a chalice
Where colors from teardrops are spun;
She smiles, and their arrows quick darting
Through woof of that fabric of dreams,
The arch of the rainbow is starting,—
Her smiles and her tears are its beams.

I lean from my window at evening,
I hear a low murmur afar;
And is Earth her jewels receiving,
Or is it the gleam of a star?
O April! capricious yet tender,
The bridesmaid of Winter and Spring,
The Summer her homage may render,
But yours is the gift of the ring.

MAY

I HEAR her swift feet coming
By ways the south wind clears;
I hear her low voice humming
The music of the spheres;
I feel her warm heart beating
On Nature's eager breast,
While snow and ice retreating
Comply with her behest.

With gift of gold the willows
Lift high their welcoming hands;
By sunshine led, the billows
Kneel low upon the sands;
She comes, her power confessing,
The wind and sun obey,
And earth receives her blessing—
The heart of Spring—sweet May.

JUNE

HARK! a new comer!
Lo, it is Summer!
Pan sets his pipes to her tune;
Down by the river
Reeds are a-quiver,
Waiting—all waiting for June.

No longer hidden,
Wild flowers are bidden
Censers to swing 'neath the moon;
Night is resplendent,
Stars are attendant,
Waiting—all waiting for June.

Summer insisting,
Calls to her trysting
Forests with green's royal boon;
Breezes compelling,
Bird carols swelling,
Waiting—all waiting for June.

Soft airs perfuming,
Roses are blooming
Red in the sunshine of noon;
Snowy in whiteness,
Golden in brightness,
Waiting—all waiting for June.

White clouds low sailing
Watch her unveiling,
River and sea sing her rune;
Robed in rare splendor,
Regal yet tender,
Earth crowns the Summer with June.

JULY

Blue haze dims hills against the sky,
The pasture grass is brown and dry,
The sun shines hot on gray stone wall,
The corn leaf's edges withered fall,
The brook is lost among the stones,
The pine tree holds its dusty cones,
The garden withers in the heat,
The flower bed drops its blossoms sweet,
The locust whirrs, and dragon flies
Shake out their gauzy draperies;
Upon the grass the spider's net
By drop of dew is never wet;
The heat throbs with metallic sound
In stifling air—on iron ground.
The cattle gather where the trees
Wait hopeless for a cooling breeze.
And so the days and nights go by
In breathless, sighing, hot July.

AUGUST

Ye crystal days of August that smile upon the hills,
And send your sunbeams seeking the perfume summer spills,
The blue skies are your banners, the forests wear your shields;
The army of the harvest sets vanguard in your fields.
Warm breezes from the tropics bring waves of throbbing heat,
The locust's scorching accents the breathless stillness greet;
The brook with gentle murmur the mossy stone enfolds,
And goldenrod has burnished the scepter that he holds,
The clouds in fleecy whiteness lift battlements that rise
To build a heavenly city upon the radiant skies,
And high above, white mountains its shining towers enclose,
As if the heart of summer remembers winter snows.

Ye crystal nights of August, your shadows on the lawn
Grow deep when herald twilight your mystic veil has drawn;
The aspen cymbals quiver though wind-harps all are still,
And no æolian whisper is heard upon the hill.
In breathless silence driven across the waiting sky,
A trail of fire for signal, the shooting star-worlds fly;

And while Orion watches their course of rushing
light,
They vanish like a vision that thrills the breast of
night.
The midnight hour approaches and all the stars grow
pale,
As rising to the zenith the moon withdraws her veil.
Night gathers up the jewels in star-fields thickly
sown,
And crowns her queen triumphant upon a silver
throne.

SEPTEMBER

While summer days grew brown and old
A wizard delved in mines of gold;
No idler he—by night, by day,
He smiled and sang and worked away;
And, scorning thrift, with lavish hand
He cast his gold across the land.

The maples caught it ere it fell;
Witch-hazel turned before its spell;
The goldenrod's high plumes of green
Were feathered with its yellow sheen;
While barberry bush and bitter-sweet
Wore berries golden as the wheat.

Still smiling, o'er the trees he wound
Long russet scarfs with crimson bound;
He drew a veil of purple haze
O'er distant hills where cattle graze;
He bathed the sun in amber mist,
And steeped the sky in amethyst.

Low in the East for crowning boon
He hung the golden harvest moon;
And donned his coat of frosty white
As twilight deepened into night.
Then to the roll-call of the year
September answered, "I am here!"

OCTOBER

The trees hold russet tankards
For Autumn's sparkling wine;
Ere purple grapes are broken
Upon the swinging vine
The breezes bring for token
The breath of spices fine.

Afar upon the hillside
The sumach's torches flame;
The green of Summer spurning,
The stately maples claim
A crimson flag whose burning
Waves high a golden name.

The sword of great Orion
Guards well the cup at night;
O'er moon and stars in splendor
Aurora swings her light,
While Earth again doth tender
Her potion of delight.

Oh, press it to your lips, dear,
October's glowing bowl;
O'er perfumed rim it offers,
With fire of altar's coal,
A draught whose rich depth proffers
Elixir for the soul.

NOVEMBER

Beneath the hills like shepherd roods
The slender saplings stand;
Above the hills November broods
And lifts a warning hand
To velvet winds that soft caress
The forest's silver nakedness.

The mystic air in shadow folds
The russet of the hills;
An opalescent haze upholds
The cup that actumn fills
With essence of the harvest wine—
Elixir, nectar, anodyne.

The firmament by night is starred
With golden mystery;
Its wide expanse is silver-barred
And locked with hidden key.
By day the sky though gray its hue
Reflects the summer's depth of blue.

O month of nun and acolyte,
Your draught we fain must sip,
The while your hand lies on your heart
Your finger on your lip;
For thus you veil in smile and tear
The secret of the passing year.

DECEMBER

DECEMBER, dearest month and last,
The snow a mantle white
Wraps all that dark and evil is
Away from mortal sight;

The winds blow high, the winds blow low,
The strong waves rise and fall,
For they the ice-king's masons are
To build his palace wall.

They bring Carrara marble white,
Blue lapis lazuli,
Translucent blocks of malachite—
The shadows of the sea.

They call the sun to set the stones
With diamond-studded darts,
They bring a rainbow to o'erarch
The amethystine parts.

And so the stately pillars grow,
And so the turrrets rise,
The frost embroiders through the night
A veil of Paradise;

And only at the break of day
Is drawn that mystic veil,
And only craft is wafted near
When set with dreamland sail.

Yet golden in the azure skies
A radiant star doth shine,
The prototype of herald star
That shed a light divine

When brooding o'er Judea's hills
It lay on night's fair breast,
While sages worshipping kneeled low,
And holy sign confessed.

And so December sets today,
As first in ages far,
Upon the skies of Christmas night,
Messiah's herald star.

DAWN

THE Light comes in at my window
To sit in the darkest place,
And the cool, soft hand of the Morning
Is laid on my sleeping face.

The Sun swings open the windows
Of his palace that looks on the sea,
And his wonderful garden beckons
To the Lady of Morn and to me.

The flowers in the garden are crimson,
The trees with glory aflame,
And I am the guest of honor;
I woke when I heard my name.

I gaze at the marvelous pageant
While all the stars grow pale;
I breathe with the new creation,
I drink from the Holy Grail.

O BEAUTIFUL DAY

O BEAUTIFUL day to live in!
The hills in their blue veils of haze,
And the sunshine flooding the valleys
Where the cattle in quiet graze.

O beautiful day to work in!
The air full of heavenly wine,
And the thought of the world working with us
In strength for the conquest divine.

O beautiful day to love in!
Earth an altar, with Nature the priest,
And the heart like a Moslem low kneeling,
The face of the soul to the east.

SPRING

Who is this that flying comes
  Over hill and valley?
Forest wood-winds, trumpets, drums,
  At her summons rally.

When her footsteps softly press
  Rustling leaves and grasses,
Dwellers in the wilderness
  Hail her as she passes.

Yesterday was bleak and cold,
  Frozen snow had drifted;
Now the green shafts pierce the mold,
  Banners green are lifted.

Hark! The signal! Birds appear—
  Bluejays, martins, thrushes.
Listen! listen! Do not fear!
  Build among the bushes!

Hear the music of the spheres
  Through the forest ringing;
Yesterday was drowned in tears,
  But Today is singing.

Sorrow from the earth is pruned,
  Time marks only pleasures;
Nature's orchestra is tuned
  To celestial measures.

Oh, the radiant skies of morn!
  Oh, the fountains flowing!
Oh, the joy of earth new born!
  Oh, the bliss of growing!

Come, ye wood-winds, trumpets, drums,
  To the woodland meeting.
'Tis the Lady Spring who comes!
  Give her royal greeting!

MY WISH

I do not ask for dazzling gems
  Or mines of shining gold;
I do not ask for wealth of land
  In lordly acres told.

But oh, to own an apple tree,
  And on a winter day
To see the snow fall on its boughs
  And hide their brown away.

In spring to watch the swelling buds
  That clustering leave no room
For boughs whose brown is hid again
  By weight of rosy bloom.

And then to mark the petals fall
  Until the leaves are seen
That wrap once more the dark brown boughs
  In summer's royal green.

At last in autumn when those boughs
  With crimson fruit bend down,
I could not envy any king
  The glory of his crown.

For life and love would tell their tales
  Of heavenly joy to me,
If I could only have my wish,
  And own an apple tree.

APPLE BLOSSOMS

The apple tree is white with bloom;
Through Spring air filters soft perfume,
And shadows lie in drifts of pink.
O thirsty soul, come here to drink!

Come! To your weary lips lift up
A draught that brims in Memory's cup;
Fragrant with years when, all abloom,
This tree for children's play made room.

It roofed with pink their happy hearts,
And through white rifts sent sunbeam darts;
They had no thought beyond their glee,
When sporting 'neath the apple tree.

Alas! my steps have wandered far
From apple bloom and childhood's star;
I had well-nigh forgot the day
Which canopied with flowers my play.

But years may pass and bring regret,
Sad thoughts may start the tears, and yet
My childhood heart returns to me,
When blossoms forth the apple tree.

SPRING'S LARGESS

NATURE never is exclusive,
She is guest at cot and hall
And her springtime invitations
Are extended to us all.

Piercing heavy palace curtains,
Attics high and cellars low,
Darting into dingy alleys,
See her herald sunbeams go.

Soft air calls the little children,
With the day's enchanted dawn,
To the dandelion meadow,
To the crocus-dotted lawn,—

Calls them to the shabby sidewalk
Of the dark, unlovely street,
Where in games and songs and dances
Happy circles gaily meet.

Driving in the park, my lady
Of Spring's incense drinks her fill;
Far away, her tenement sister
Feels the same ecstatic thrill.

Nature gives the Spring unstinted;
Blooming tree and perfumed air
Are for all, and each receiver
Knows himself a millionaire.

There's no need for miser's hoarding,
  Or for questions,—where or which?
What we take does not diminish,
  What we leave does not enrich.

God and Nature give the springtime
  Without touch of dark alloy;
There's no bitter in the sweetness,
  There's no sorrow in the joy.

All the bonds of love are strengthened;
  Humblest peasant, haughtiest king,
Stand together at her footstool,
  Sharing in the gift of Spring.

ROSE SECRETS

"WHAT makes you pink, my pale pink rose?
  Red rose, what makes you red?
"The earth alone the secret knows,"
  The pink and red rose said.

"She hid us safe within the mold
  Where light was never seen;
She kept our slender stems from cold
  And wound their living green.

"Around the bud for guardian sheath
  She set a calyx bower,
And folded close, its spires beneath,
  The little baby flower.

"She sent for pink from seashell's beak,
  For red from sunset sky,
And on the velvet of each cheek
  She laid its radiant dye."

"What makes you fragrant, crimson rose?
  Pink rose, what makes you sweet?"
"The gentle dew the secret knows,
  We learned it at his feet.

"By night he took the fondest care
  Of alchemy's slow birth
And mingled the ingredients rare
  In vessels of the earth.

"He blended subtle odors, till
They throbbed within the gloom,
Impatient our fair flower to fill
With ravishing perfume."

"I do not understand," I said,
"The color or the scent";
Smiled then the pink rose and the red,
"O Mortal, be content.

"Though we are scattered far and wide
By every wind that blows,
No single petal e'er can hide
Its kinship to the rose.

"The color's secret is our own,
Hid with a miser's care;
The odor's fountain is unknown
Elusive as the air.

"No Galahad his pure eyes turns
Where we blush red and pale;
And yet our perfumed chalice burns—
The Rose's Holy Grail."

MY CRAB APPLE TREE

GREEN is the grass by the roadside,
  Green is the grass by the lake;
Birches and elms are still dreaming
  Of green they will wear when awake.
But into my face brightly smiling,
  When I look from my window I see,
Full leaved in the beauty of April,
  My dear little crab apple tree.

The birds gladly visit her branches,
  And twitter of nests that will sway
In the shadow of leaf-clusters hidden,
  When April gives welcome to May.
Then the eager buds push back the leaflets,
  And the pink of the June rose I see,
For blossoms are blushing in beauty
  On my dear little crab apple tree.

HEARTSEASE

The violet lifts its lovely head
  By sunbeams kissed and bathed in dew;
The lily borrows sheen of snow
  And golden stamens tremble through.

The honeysuckle blows afar
  Its sweets through trumpet's curving grace;
The red rose smiles when balmy winds
  Caress her petals' velvet face.

Days, weeks, and months in silence wrought
  To steep the perfume, tint the flower,
And bring the perfect blossom here,
  To consecrate to love its hour.

But there's a flower more fair that needs
  No nurturing of weeks or days;
Its perfume's sweeter far than that
  Of other flowers we love to praise.

It never withers, never dies,
  It blooms perennial to delight;
It laughs at Time who slowly tills—
  For heartsease groweth in a night.

PROPHECY

A BROWN bird came from the southern land:
"Is sign of the summer-time showing?"
The meadow lark's singing the azure spanned:
"I hear the anemone growing."

"Oh, listen," sang he, "to the voice of the mold,
For life from her bosom is starting;
The crocus and tulip and hyacinth bold
The crust of the winter are parting."

The meadow lark carolled his herald song,
The prelude to wild bees humming.
Farewell to the winter so cold, so long,
And hail to the summer-time coming!

GORSE

THERE is an olden proverb
  In the land of yellow broom;
'Tis that "Kissing's out of fashion
  When the gorse is out of bloom."

But the gorse's yellow blossoms
  Never seal true lovers' doom—
There's not a month of all the year
  When gorse is out of bloom.

So lovers smile their pleasure,
  For frowns there is no room,
And kissing's aye the fashion,
  For the gorse is aye in bloom,

PARTING SUMMER

She turns to look upon the royal lands
  That lately were her own;
There stalwart young October beckoning stands,
  Usurper of her throne,
Like Midas, turning into shining gold
The vernal treasures she had left unrolled.

He calls her: "Summer, radiant Summer, wait;
  I long for your embrace."
She listens to his pleading; is it Fate,
  Or splendor of his face
That lures her o'er the meadow? She returns,
Drawn by the golden fire that in him burns.

October holds her in his eager arms;
  She lingers with delight;
Her fragrant breath his frosty pillow warms
  Throughout the starry night.
By day her sun-born alchemy she pours,
To woo the spices from his golden stores.

'Tis the apotheosis of the year.
  The amethystine air
Conceals in mystery of smile and tear
  Love-philters everywhere.
Divine October holds the wondrous spell
That will not let the Summer say farewell.

ORIOLE

While summer was smiling, the valley
A subtle infusion had made
Of pines, spruces, ferns, fragrant mosses,
And sweet flowers distilled in the shade;
And then between daylight and darkness,
The hour when the heart bows in prayer,
The dews filtered all this quintessence
Of odor to perfume the air.

The fireflies were flashing their lanterns;
A locust his tambourine whirred;
A butterfly gleamed in the roadway,
And never a leaflet was stirred;
A dragon fly, dressed in her gauzes,
Sped by with a tremulous hum;
And standing erect on a tree-trunk
A woodpecker beat his gray drum.

Then sounded a call from the branches,
Sweet and shrill, from the lark's golden throat;
'Twas answered by robin and sparrow,
And last came the oriole's note—
That rapturous song from the tree-top.
The new moon rose over the hill,
For the oriole sang to her beauty,
And the birds of the forest were still.

ASTER AND GOLDENROD

THE aster and the goldenrod they blossom side by side,
The goldenrod is bridegroom, the aster is the bride.
Sun burnishes the bridegroom's coat, paints aster's purple gown,
And sets a shining golden ball to flute her skirts upon.
The bridegroom waves his yellow plume, the fair bride curtseys low;
The soft wind breathes a wedding song; he learned it long ago.

AUTUMN

The fallow fields in their dark beauty lie
  Close to the tender green
Of springing wheat; the Summer passes by
  And smiles upon the scene,—
Lingering where on the southern hillside steep
Alert and quiet graze the peaceful sheep.

She lights the brown of every waiting field,
  She lights the vivid green;
She makes the pallid, rustling cornstalks yield
  A shaft of golden sheen.
Red lights glow in the forest's russet lines,
And emerald drifts into the dark green pines.

No wandering breath of wind comes stealing through
  The trees; none wakes the stream.
The soft sky,—is it gray or tender blue
  Whereon the white clouds dream?
The earth, the sky, the air—they are all filled
With Autumn's mystic perfume undistilled.

O Love, my Love, come walk upon the hills!
  Breathe the enchanted air!
In all the largess lavish Nature spills
  Shall we alone not share?
Unless at her great altar we may meet
The heavenly symphony is incomplete.

THE BROOK

TIRED, lonely, heart-sick, do I come
To thee, dear Brook, as to a home.
Upon thy mossy bank I rest
And touch the ferns thou hast caressed.
Then with a long and weary sigh
I let my world of care go by.

Thou blessed Brook! I give to thee
Discouragement and misery.
My heart grows light and tears at last
Bring balm for all my sorrows past.

I watch the slender grasses dip
The nectar of thy breath to sip.
The fluted lichens, gray and dry,
Hang over rocks imbedded high;
The crimson sumach's velvet pole
Claims as his own the Cardinal's role.
And all the while upon the stones
I hear the rippling undertones
That soothe my heart to quiet rest
As if upon a Mother's breast.

And what of thee, to whom I give
Such burdens? How dost thou receive?
With shining breast and purling voice
I hear thee whisper: "I rejoice,
And for thy gift of sorrow's part
I give thee back a happy heart."

THE SPRING

FROM the hillside came a spring—
Lovely, sparkling, dancing thing.
"I will roof it," Nature said;
"Oak and maple overhead
Shall their branches interlace,
And the periwinkle's grace,
Carpeting the sheltered place,
Shall embroider its fair bed.
Lichens gray and brown and red
On the slope their cups shall show
Filled by crystal overflow."
So the roots of giant trees
Bent their gray and ancient knees,
Worshipping beside the spring
Where birds came to sip and sing.
Ferns combed out their soft brown hair,
Silver leaflets waited there
Just to dip again and glow
In the water's overflow.
Then the happy, laughing spring—
Lovely, sparkling, dancing thing,
Calmed her ripples into rest,
Made a mirror of her breast,
And the ancient trees she wooed
Till they left their solitude
In the upper air, to lie,
Leaves and branches—even sky,
Nests of birds, each treasured thing—
In the mirror of the spring.
Look! For here today you see
How they keep her company—
When winds rest and birds all sing,
See the picture in the spring!

TRANSITION

Before September's knell is rung,
Above the distant hills is swung
The twilight's glory, lost too soon,—
The wondrous golden harvest moon.
Ere long her gold to silver turns;
High overhead her white torch burns;
Below, where deepest shadows lurk,
Sir Harlequin is at his work.

His palette with the rainbow set,
His brushes with the night-dews wet,
He paints the bushes, vines, and trees
In matchless wizard harmonies.
October finds the world arrayed,
As if for royal masquerade.

From velvet pyramid o'erhead
The sumach's crimson wings are spread;
The woodbine's graceful pennants float
Above the hawthorn's glossy coat;
From yellow of the mountain ash
The scarlet berries gleam and flash;
The rose-hips flame, white seeds unfold,
Beech, birch, and elm are touched to gold.

November's russets gently creep,
To woo the revelers to sleep.
The outline of the sombre pines
Defines the forest's sentinel lines.
No wind the mountain summit sweeps,
No rain leaf-woven carpet steeps;
The tranquil earth her heart beguiles
With Indian Summer's gentle smiles.

THE FOREST SAMSON

Like Samson shorn, the bare trees stand,
  Their branches dark against the sky;
Their strength forgotten by the band
  Of thoughtless, careless passers-by.

They wait in silence till the tide
  Of joyous life begins to flow,
And over branches spreading wide—
  Their sign of strength—the green leaves grow.

So Samson waited till his hair
  In all its shaven locks grew long,
And answered to his silent prayer:
  "Thou, Nazarite, again art strong."

Then called he on avenging heaven;
  Within the temple bowed his head
And clasped the pillars; walls were riven
  And he lay in the ruins—dead.

But our great trees, with strength renewed,
  Build forest temples, and the breath
Of summer winds chants through their aisles
  The prophet's song—There is no death!

INDIAN SUMMER

November with her amethyst
  Enchants the autumn air;
Its purple glows where mountains rise,
With liquid blue it steeps the skies,
  Its red the brooks ensnare.

Lured by the glow there comes a maid,
  Across the russet fields;
She throws a kiss to summer's grace,
She hides the winter's snowy face,
  The wind his homage yields.

"It is for thee," November says,
  "That I have kept my tryst,
Thou, Indian Summer queen, shalt wear
Upon the amber of thy hair
  My royal amethyst."

The maiden smiles, but in her eyes
  Are depths of tears unshed;
The purple jewel she may wear;
Yet near it, tangled in her hair,
  The summer's rose is dead.

RENASCENCE

THINK not the sun forever hides his light
When golden day is changed to blackest night,
E'en though the heart lie in the breast like stone
And though dull eyes must weep, and dry lips moan.
Be patient with thyself, poor heart, and wait
For Time to do his work—or soon or late.
Surely the heavy burdens of despair
Must lift, or else we could not live or bear
The agony of loneliness, the loss
Of the heart's magnet—anchor changed for cross,
And duty paralyzed as if by shock
To a foundation that seemed built on rock.
So has the great volcano's heart been rent,
Flaming and thundering till its power was spent;
Then sinking like a child, exhausted, weak,
Who breathless can no longer move or speak;
So lies the crater 'neath the ashes gray
Wherein its fiery heart has burned away.
A tender breath thrills in the winter air,
A prophecy of spring to branches bare.
Snow melts, dust wraps the crater in a veil,
Rain brings the icy jewels of the hail,
Sun shines, winds carry wealth of feathery seeds,
A miracle is wrought that no one heeds.
Within the crater, like a haze is seen
The tender beauty of the living green;
Grass grows apace, plants rise and flowers bloom,
The ashy crater is no more a tomb;
It is a cradle hallowed by the birth
Of life that brings new beauty to the earth.
So do Time's gentle ministries impart
New life unto the ashes of the heart.

THE PRAIRIE

All day we rode by high mountains
By rivers that lingered and curved,
And night came and lighted her star-lamps
While still to the westward we swerved.
But in the gray light of the morning,
I looked from my window to see
That mountain and river had vanished
And the prairies stretched boundless and free.

Oh, the heart is not chained to a mountain,
Or moored to a river's fair breast;
Wherever its dear ones are gathered
Is the home of its joy and its rest.
Farewell to you, mountains and rivers,
I love all your grandeur to see,
But the vision of home is the sweetest,
The prairie! the prairie for me!

BLUE AND GOLD

THE scarlet sun in the golden west,
The silver moon in the azure east,
And the space between over which I fly,
Suffused with the colors of the sky.

O wondrous world that glows and pales
To feast our souls on the intervales!

I look at the east through the lovely screen
That Springtime weaves of her leafy green,
And the great round silver moon hangs low
Over hills that were lately hid in snow,
But now are as blue as the sky that holds
This silver moon in its azure folds.

I turn to look at the golden west,
At the scarlet sun with its orange crest,
At the earth—a vision in green and gray,
Wreathed in pink flowers for the Lady May.
Then my heart forgets the pain of years,
And welcomes new joy with happy tears.

O world of beauty by heaven blest,
With your moon in the east and your sun in the west!

THE BOOM OF THE LAKE

SOME long for the mountains and some for the sea,
Some sigh for the prairies and wilderness free,
Some dream of the northland and breath of its pines,
Some pray for the southland with fruit-laden vines;
But never a voice to my heart doth call
Like the boom of the lake on the gray sea wall.

Sometimes 'tis a mirror with clouds on its breast,
The sun silvers over their cradle of rest,
The south wind breathes softly the quiet to keep,
And evening weaves gently her mantle of sleep;
Then, standing alone, solemn, stately, and tall,
A fortress-like guard is the gray sea wall.

But hark! from the north comes a furious blast,
The east wind to meet it is hurrying past,
The waves leap forth madly the tempest to greet,
The storm-king triumphant sees earth at his feet;
And far up the north shore there sounds over all
The boom of the lake on the gray sea wall.

In lands far away though my footsteps may roam,
My thoughts swiftly hasten to seek a dear home
That memory brings in her beautiful dreams
Where white waves curl over the sun's golden beams;
Then answers my heart to a rapturous call—
The boom of the lake on the gray sea wall.

CREMATION

WHEN wide my prison gates of life are swung,
What will you do with mortal robe that clung
To keep me here? Dear friends, ah, do not lay
That cast-off garment in the ground, I pray;
But let the throbbing white heat of the fire
Leave only ashes on its funeral pyre.
Then say: "She longed to bring rare beauty here,
To make the desert blossom through the year;
And if, perchance, her dreaming was denied,
The more through death let her be satisfied."

So, when the fire is out, and ashes white
Are all the mortal remnant left to sight,
Then scatter them upon the garden bed
Where the red rose-tree lifts its lovely head,
And let it say, as deeper red it glows:
"She is not dead; she lives within the rose."

TO A MALACHITE GEODE

Fair Malachite, our Mother Earth
In silent darkness gave you birth;
Within your geode cradle locked,
On seas of vapor gently rocked,
You slumbered till your velvet heart
Of these gray walls became a part.

But not alone, dear Malachite,
You lived, shut out from earthly light;
To keep you company there grew
A trio bright and fair as you,
And darkness wrapped them with a sheen
That rivals e'en your velvet green.

Still swung within your shadowed nest,
The eons brought you—rare bequest!—
To show that dreams of human heart
Cannot imagine Nature's art.

For when your burnished cradle broke,
And to the light of day you woke,
You stood in velvet, emerald bright,
A miracle in Malachite.

NOSTALGIA

Oh, lovely are the western skies, grand are the western hills;
The wonder of this Golden State my heart with rapture fills;
The ocean beats against its shore, white sands lie on its beach;
The song of beauty evermore, sea, sky, and mountains teach.
And yet, and yet, why did I roam,
Who always, always long for home!

I do not see these western skies or mountains rising near,
I do not see this Golden State or ocean stretching here;
My heart flies eastward, and I gaze on forest, vale, and rill,
The gentle slope of velvet fields, the heaven-kissing hill.
For oh! though far away I roam,
My sweetest thoughts are all of home.

THE TEAR JAR

A MASTER, working once with air and fire
Was overcome with sudden, mad desire
To fix the hues that haunted him in sleep
And prove that centuries his dream might keep.

He caught the vision that entranced his heart,
And left the witness of his wondrous art
In this rare vase, molded by his deft hand,
Dipped into sky-hues by the sunset spanned
And steeped with their pulsating living flame,
When into gold the blue and scarlet came
And blended with the purple, violet, green,
Till all suffused into this matchless sheen.

Perchance a vivid rainbow, earthward bent,
Its moment of supremest color lent;
Or golden topaz by the sapphire kissed,
Blushed into ruby, paled to amethyst.
And with the opal's swift, elusive gleam
Kindled this flaming substance of a dream.

All to what end? To lie in silent tomb,
To hide this splendor in sepulchral gloom;
This reservoir, enshrining tears and sighs
Hopeless to meet the gaze of human eyes—
Yet all for love to lie with moldering frame;
And all for love, unseen to burn this flame.

The centuries passed and strangers broke the stone
That sealed the ashes of the dead unknown.
Lo! then revealed by startled rays of light
This moon of splendor lit a cavern's night,

More eloquent than royal sepulchre
To tell its tale of beauty o'er and o'er;
And although silent, evermore to speak—
Its myriad colors strong where words are weak.
So speaks its silent voice in beauty's gleam:
"Men die, but not the artist's glorious dream."

THE SUNFLOWER HEDGE

SOMETIMES in the city I lose the sense
Of the hurry and rush and the life intense;
The bricks and the mortar fade away,
And I see as plainly as light of day
The blue of skies in the summer's hush,
A bittersweet screen and a barberry bush;
And then all the landscape seems to fill
With the sunflower hedge at the top of the hill.

Ah, the city shuts down upon life like stone;
In the midst of its crowding the soul is alone;
The heart aches with woes that it cannot reach,
And broods over lessons it cannot teach.
Then memory wakes, and the city flies;
Joy greets the green meadows and azure skies,
And once more the landscape seems to fill
With the sunflower hedge at the top of the hill.

FIRELIGHT

SHINE through the windows tonight, O fire!
Shine to guide homeward the feet that tire;
Cheer thou the traveler on his way;
Gather the circle at home today;
Shine on the wanderer! Draw him near;
Give him a welcome for all the year.

"Come," says the fire, "my flame shall light
Path through the forest though it be night;
As in my welcome I mount the higher,
Gather around the old home fire;
For in my flaming a love doth shine
That lifts the heart to the love divine."

LONELINESS

I go through the streets of the city,
  And sadly my heart makes its moan;
There is no one to love and to pity,
  Forever I wander alone.
I think of the dear home at twilight,
  The air with sweet perfume is damp,
And the rose vine looks in at the window
  While Mother is lighting the lamp.

  Oh, give me my little home cottage
    Where dear ones around me I see!
  The loneliest place in the wide, wide world
    Is the street of the city to me.

What thousands of faces pass by me—
  The troubled, the sad, and the gay;
But none of them ever seems nigh me,
  And my sad heart is far, far away.
I hear the faint lowing of cattle,
  I see the church under the hill,
Alas! that I only am dreaming!
  I'm alone in the great city still.

  Oh, give me my little home cottage
    Where dear ones around me I see!
  The loneliest place in the wide, wide world
    Is the street of the city to me.

ETERNAL YOUTH

WHEN swift years come and swift years go
Shall brow be lined and form bent low?
Shall feet move slow o'er rugged way,
Hands lose their skill, head droop in gray,
And heart grow weary while life's fire
In ashes burns like funeral pyre?

No! the soul dauntless may arise
With quenchless flame in sparkling eyes;
Through living channels may the blood
Flow in a quick and steady flood;
The skilful hand and active brain
May each day's round of good attain,
And we from strength to strength may grow
Because Love's tide doth ceaseless flow.
For at the fountain of God's truth
The soul receives eternal youth.

FOUNDLINGS

O CHILDREN, destined from your birth
To wear the stain of others' sin,
And guiltless pay the penalty
Of those who walk unbranded, free,
Has Justice any part herein?
Is God abroad upon the earth?

Poor children, who have never known
A father's love, a mother's care,
What does life offer in return
For those lost joys for which we yearn?
Say, must the darkness be your share
Wherein ye live and die alone?

Ah, not of God your cruel brand,
Man's laws relentless wield the rod.
'Tis thus that Christ was crucified
And sinless for the sinful died.
Are ye not too the Lambs of God
Who white in His white presence stand?

Dear children, at God's judgment bars
All guilt shall lie where guilt belongs.
And innocent as now in white,
And pure revealed by heavenly light,
Yours then shall be the triumph songs,
And yours the martyr's crown of stars.

SONG OF THE SHIP

Oh, the wind may blow
And the ship may go
All day in the rolling sea;
But when evening falls
And the sunset calls
Then at last the ship is free.

She was wet all day
With the salt sea spray,
And she rode like a bird on the wave;
She gave no care
To the vast deep where
There is many a lonely grave.

The sunset showed
Where a ruby glowed
And an opal lay on the gray,
While a topaz gold
Held a sapphire fold
In the robe of the dying day.

Oh, the wind may blow
And the ship may go
All day in the rolling sea;
But when evening falls
And the sunset calls
Then at last the ship is free.

TO AN ANCIENT GLASS VASE

Wondrous glass of ruined Rome,
Can you call this new world home?
Was your radiance of green,
Dashed with blue and golden sheen,
Caught from rainbows that arched o'er
Classic lands in days of yore?

Hidden in a kingly tomb,
Did you cherish in its gloom
Fires of color that still burn
Quenchless in funereal urn,
Ruby's red and emerald's green,
Opal, beryl, tourmaline?
Lost the art that prisoned here
Secrets of another sphere!

You were shaped for sorrow's tears,
Formed to hold through endless years
Symbols of heart's bitter pain.
But 'tis well that, sealed in vain,
You relinquished to the air
Signs of anguish and despair,
Leaving beauty here and grace,
Mute to stand in numbered place,
Yet in silence eloquent
Of a past with mystery blent.

Shut behind these fast locked bars,
Do you miss the touch of stars
Shining bright from old-world skies?
Shining, too, from old-world eyes?

Your fair beauty once revealed
That the tomb had long concealed,
Who with cold heart could resist
What the light with love had kissed?

Then no longer lonely, sad,
Let our homage make you glad!
Wondrous glass of ancient Rome,
Welcome to this new world home!

ROSEDALE'S OLD FLOOR

You do not like me here, Old Floor!
You creak and groan and grumble sore
However softly I tiptoe
Above the beams you cherish so.
Perchance so long you've silent lain
That simply tired you now complain;
Perchance you miss the ancient ways
And give these sighs for olden days.
You long for satin petticoats,
For ruffled shirts and broidered coats,
For hoops and trains and powdered hair,
For high-heeled shoes, to trip your stair.
Your creaks and groanings are in vain,
You cannot break the plumber's main,
Or stop the water, hot and cold,
Coursing through pipes that you must hold;
And though their slender presence tires,
You're wedded to electric wires.
Old Floor, since old, why not be wise,
And prove me false in my surmise
That though you think of olden days
You have not learned their courteous ways?
Those noble lords and ladies fair
Were always too polite to swear,
As you do in your groans and creaks—
Words that the well-bred never speaks.
Think of the ancient chivalry!
Do not disgrace your ancestry;
And howe'er great your discontent,
Pray do not make it evident,
But a respectful silence keep
When to your neighborhood I creep;

For though I'm not from days of yore,
But modern to the very core,
Your beams, planks, rafters journeyed here
From ancient forests I revere;
And as I walk from door to door
I love you, ancient Rosedale Floor.

THE LADY BARBARA

THE ship sailed out upon the sea,
She spread her sails to breezes free,
Her flag swung from the tall mast-tree—
She was a lordly craft.

She sailed into the shining west,
Each wave tossed high its snowy crest;
Of all good ships she was the best—
The Lady Barbara.

She sailed into the west's wide path
The Storm King met her in his wrath,
The wild waves cut a cruel swath,
And swept her to her doom.

Oh, then the sea made prey of her,
The angry sea held sway of her,
Nor was there one delay of her,
To feed the sea's revenge.

He cut her decks with stinging lash,
Nor could the day his wrath abash,
Till through the hull sea-fiends could dash,
Nor was he satisfied.

He tossed the sails upon the main,
He laughed to see the deck's red stain,
To hear the shrieks that were in vain,
While sailors sank to death.

Then winds were calm and waves were spent,
The sea like infant innocent
Spread in the sun his sapphire tent.
The ship—oh, where was she!

In fathoms of the deep below,
Sunk in the caves that mermaids know,
She lies where wild winds never blow—
The Lady Barbara.

LORD ROSLYN

Beside the pillar Roslyn stood
And gazed into the gloom
Where all the Lords of Roslyn lay
In death's cold silence laid away
Within their stately tomb.

The Lords of Roslyn in that vault
Uncoffined lie in state;
Their armor hides the form of clay
Slow moldering to dust away,
While they for Roslyns wait.

When Roslyns die the doors swing wide;
Room, there is ever room.
From the recesses dark and damp
Winds rush to dim the day-star's lamp
And petrify the gloom.

Lord Roslyn's father there was laid,
Another armored one.
"Close, close the doors," Lord Roslyn said,
"Remember, all, when I am dead
To lay me in the sun."

The years went on till Roslyn died,
And then his will was done.
The ghastly tomb was undisturbed;
With breath of flower and song of bird
They laid him in the sun.

SHAKESPEARE

1564—April 23—1616

Spring made a poet's cradle
Of willows, from a stream
Whose curves she loved to follow
In following her dream.
She wove that precious cradle
Of colors April brought;
With blue from skies of azure,
With white of clouds she wrought;
Embroidered fleecy borders
With tender forest green,
And fringed the snowy blankets
With rainbow knots between.
And then, since joy is gladder
Because it once knew pain,
She braided in the sunshine
With drops of silver rain.

From crevices in mountains
She took the brown and gray,
For lights are all the lovelier
That with the shadows play.
Gay sunbeams were her shuttles,
Their silver light flashed through
The shining rainbow colors—
The lovely white and blue.
So, from earth-fields and sky-fields,
With shuttles gay and wild,
She wove a fairy cradle
To hold her poet-child.

At last, with work completed
And heart still light and gay,
She sang her song to cities
Along the world's highway:
"Here in this bed," she murmured,
"A wonder-child shall rest;
His gift a prophet's vision,
The pearl of truth his quest.
The world shall bless his coming
And hail him poet-seer,—
Shall smile beside his cradle
And weep beside his bier."

Then breathlessly she waited
And held her April near,
Because with joy abated
She saw her poet's bier.
Behind the mystic shadow
That wraps the thunder-cloud,
She knelt within the darkness
To weave her poet's shroud.
The shuttles moved so slowly
Among the strands of pain,
She scarcely heard the message
That came in low refrain:
"Your poet lives forever
And time can never dim
The lustre of his glory;
The world will honor him."

Spring heard and left the shadow,
Sunshine about her played;
She looked across the ages
And was no more afraid.

"My Poet—not mine only—
No selfish thought I bring;
You are the world's joy-giver,
The world will crown you king.
Yet, since from heights of vision
Life's lowest depths appear,
I'll weep beside your cradle
And smile beside your bier."

The ages claim their forfeit,
All nations pay the cost;
In depths of dark oblivion
Peasant and king are lost.
But Spring clings to the memories
That April always brings;
The eager world still listens,
And still her Poet sings.

SHAKESPEARE'S APRIL

O WONDROUS month of April when England is aglow,
Remembering her poet born in April long ago!
O wondrous month of April when England's all
abloom,
Yet weeps because her poet lies in an April tomb!

LINCOLN'S WISH

"Die when I may, let it be said
  By friends who know me best,
He plucked a thistle from its bed
And set a flower in its stead,
  Where'er a flower could rest."

Lincoln! that wish was granted thee!
  Thy hand by God was led
To pluck the thistle, Slavery,
And plant the flower, Liberty,
  To bloom when thou wert dead.

GUARDED

Soul, never count thyself bereft
While sun and stars to thee are left;
God's love enwraps thee o'er and o'er,
Gives more whene'er thou askest more.
Life, calm and strong and sweet shall be
When in each least detail we see
The Infinite, that everywhere
The Finite guards with tender care.

"SAVOIR TOUT C'EST PARDONNER TOUT"

A TENDER proverb often heard in France,
Woven in allegory and romance.
Who can know all?—the depths of others' woe,
The heights of joy where wilder natures go?
Those who resist temptation know not all
Its power. Only those know who struggling fall.
No one can understand a human soul
Except his own; nor that can he control.

Is it, dear Christ, because Thou knowest all,
That Thou dost mark the weakest sparrow's fall?
That Thou dost share each soul's Gethsemane,—
Dost see the vision of what each might be?
For here today even as in days of yore,
Forgiving Thou dost whisper: Sin no more.

CRINAN CANAL

A NARROW stream in graceful curves
Winds in and out and gently swerves
Through fertile fields where yesterday
The mowers cut the fragrant hay;
Its breath is wafted on the breeze
To rival odors of the trees;
For here, with spice of nature's wine,
Stand dusky forests of the pine
Lapped by a quiet lake where lie
Reflected, clouds that fill the sky.
On through the meadows and by hills
Where leap and foam the sparkling rills,
Escaping from the mountain's crest
To seek the river's quiet breast.
Our boat, still winding, gently comes
Close to the doors of cottage homes,
And children dance and smile though mute,
While peasants play the slender flute.
So on and on till sets the sun
And then our journey too is done.

WINDERMERE

When first I saw you, Windermere,
I thought your lake and tranquil sky
From all life's sin and doubt and fear
My soul might purify.

Your blue hills touched the fair blue sky;
They called and gently beckoned me;
"'Tis heaven's gate, do not pass by,
A welcome waits for thee."

The holy spot I climbed to seek,
In ether washed, by pine-breath shriven;
Yet standing on your highest peak
I still am far from heaven.

THE ROOFS OF ANTWERP

THE Antwerp roofs are fluted in a strange and
wondrous way,
As they rise outside my window in their ranks of
red and gray;
Their gray steps mount the gables till they meet the
chimney wall
Wherein the flues rise higher yet—serrated, dark, and
tall.
Beneath the eaves are hollows within the stucco
white,
Where the birds nest and sing by day and hide away
by night.
And there, above the angles that the Gothic artists
love,
I see the great cathedral against the sky above.
Its splendid tower is sculptured with a poet's dream
in stone
That rises, rises, rises—into the blue—alone.
Gray flocks of birds sweep round it amid shafts of
matchless grace,
And the great clock guards the minutes on its shin-
ing golden face.
Yet over all that's ancient,—all the roofs and stacks
and spires,—
The modern sets a symbol in its tense electric wires;
They stretch above the gables, they interrupt the
towers,
So slender, so relentless, they care not for the hours
That centuries have recorded upon the golden clock,
For with Youth's calm insistence at Time and Age
they mock.

But we who visit Antwerp care little for the wires
Since over them in triumph rise the towers and lofty spires;
And since below them cluster the roofs that Time has decked
Till tiles of ancient beauty are gold and crimson flecked.
O Antwerp, keep your Rubens and Van Dyck, with all their art,
But let me have your fluted roofs to carry in my heart.

ECHO MOUNTAIN

Sweet fields are decked in living green—
  Would'st find them, dear? They lie
Where Pasadena nestles 'neath
  The blue arch of the sky.

And where San Gabriel's vineyards lift
  The fruitage of their vines,
And offer purple challenge to
  The green of mountain pines.

The white clouds play in fields of sky,
  Their shadows come and go
Where sunshine smiles upon the slopes
  Of happy fields below.

The giant mountains tower above
  While ranging low across
The little hills are sentinels
  In robes of velvet moss.

The condor rests his eager wings
  On soft winds sweeping high;
The mountains drape their misty veils
  Athwart the deep blue sky.

Sweet fields are decked in living green—
  It was a prophet's word
Fulfilled where Echo Mountain shows
  This vision of the Lord.

SAINT CLOUD

O LOVELY waters, pouring down
To stairway's foot from stairway's crown,
Coming from mouths of creatures mild,
Coming from mouths of dragons wild,
From urns, from spouts on every side,
Over the stairways deep and wide!

At first all slowly rippling o'er
The stony sides and stony floor,
Then sparkling, flying, hurrying past,
Lest some small eddy should be last.
In sheets, in clouds, in veils of mist,—
Here in the shade and there sun-kissed,—
O hurrying, rippling, singing throng,
To Naiad queen do ye belong?
Or is it Undine that ye hide
In your white veils—a mystic bride?

I ask, but ye do not reply,
O lovely waters, hurrying by!

THE silver sea, the silver sea,
It ripples in the sun,
And far away, across the bay,
The sea and sky are one.

The crescent beach rounds out to reach
Point Loma's snow-white tower,
Where through the night a crimson light
Is flashed with warning power.

Afar and near, from point to pier,
The crescent curving o'er
In stars aflame doth write its name
On Coronado's shore.

The silver sea, the silver sea,
Today although we part,
The blue skies o'er this crescent shore
I keep within my heart.

GIVE THE BEST

True art belongs alike to small and great,
It knows not bonds of empire or of state,
Finding a place beneath cathedral dome,
Or lingering in the quiet walls of home;
Though stately palaces may not affright,
It seeks a lowly cottage with delight.

Then why shut out from universal place
The heavenly light that shines from true art's face?
Why offer subterfuge and mask and sham?
Why say: "You are not connoisseur—I am"?
A noble art cannot thus be deceived.
Ourselves and others surely are bereaved
When offering what the people's choice we name,
With commonplace we quench a holy flame.

No, when the call is sounded loud for bread
Think not unscathed to offer stones instead.
Art for the whole wide world is God's bequest;
Then for the people's service give the best.

THE Old Year groans in travail pains,
Death's touch her snowy pillow stains;
Above her bend the barren trees,
About her sweeps the icy breeze.
Old Year, with all your sin and pain
Why not die childless? Life is vain!
  The Old Year turns, "Beware, beware!
  Your blind eyes only see despair,
  Yet joy and gain and hope are there."

Old Year, Old Year, your strength is spent,
Die childless, and be well content
That no new year in pride of youth
Bids falsehood fall by sword of truth!
Die, for the world were better so,
Since fools but come that fools may go!
  "I bear a son. Though I be dead,
  His conquering army shall be fed
  By marshalled days and hours," she said.

"He shall have gain where I had loss;
He shall wear crown where I bore cross;
His eyes with victory shall flash
Though slavery faded mine to ash.
Time shall his noble hosts recruit,
His palms, of my defeat be fruit.
  My son shall reign. His signet ring
  The loyal from afar shall bring.
  Though I be slave, he shall be king."

The child scarce hears her dying sigh;
He wakens with a moan and cry.
Is this the boy that shall be king—
This pallid, weak, and shivering thing?
Is he to rule the months and days
Who cannot speak or scepter raise?
  Yes, for his bed is emblem fair
  Of Peace, whose banner in the air
  Gives Hope's white signal to Despair.

He shall disperse the hosts of greed,
Shall show enough for all men's need,
Shall prove to Earth's remotest end
Each man is neighbor, each is friend.
Pledge, Men and Brothers, give the seal
That joins your hands for common weal!
  Old Year, lie quiet on the snow.
  The New Year doth your thought outgrow.
  His scepter needs no scourge of rod,
  Love waves his sign from cloud to clod,
  And Love makes men the Sons of God.

EASTER

I

Look up, Belovéd, where the hills are singing
Their farewell to cold Winter's ice and snow.
See where the green-clad forest trees are swinging
Their fragrant censers slowly to and fro,—
For Spring is born.

So let thy heart, with the dear earth rejoicing,
To darkness and to sorrow, bid farewell;
Sing with the hills, Spring's resurrection voicing,
And let thy song Hope, Joy, and Love, foretell
On Easter morn.

II

The Winter's ice and snow are gone,
Flowers bloom, soft breezes blow;
The waking earth laughs in the sun
And all the world's aglow.

Tent not thy soul on Sorrow's field,
Her hosts are all forlorn;
To Love and Hope the victory yield
At break of Easter morn.

III

The glad earth wakes in beauty
To keep her tryst with Spring;
Soul, fail not in thy duty
Joy's offering to bring
On Easter day.

IV

Gone are the Winter's ice and snow,
The south wind bids the bluebird sing;
Sap in the willow is aflow,
The world stands at the gate of Spring.

Soul, art thou Winter-bound by grief?
Enter the garden of the Spring!
Earth's resurrection brings relief,
Joy be thine Easter offering.

EASTER LILY

O GOLDEN-HEARTED virgin,
Madonna of the flowers,
Wherever thou dost bourgeon
Thy purity is ours.

Thou shinest on the altar
Beneath cathedral dome;
Thy message doth not falter
Upon the shrine of home.

Oh, teach us all the duty
That lifts us o'er the clod,
In truth and love and beauty
To live and bloom for God,

His holy name confessing
To work where'er we may,
And thus to bring His blessing,
Eternal Easter Day.

THANKSGIVING SONG

O God, for all this fruitful year hath brought
For every day with countless blessings fraught,
For mines of earth, for all earth's fertile fields,
Golden with plenty that the harvest yields,
We thank Thee.

For all the blessings that the past hath given,
For all the signs to show that we have striven
To walk with Thee through all the passing years,
For joy and sorrow, for our smiles and tears,
We thank Thee.

For all the strength from holy sources drawn,
For all the joy in ties of kindred born,
For all the friends whose love is tried and true,
For love itself, sweet love—the old, the new—
We thank Thee.

THANKSGIVING DAY

LORD, Thou alone who searchest hearts canst know
How my heart longs
Silence to break and gratitude to show
With loving songs.

I walked as blind, my face to earth cast down.
Thou saidst: "Arise!
The glorious firmament is all thine own.
Claim thou the skies!"

Thy brooding care sweet gifts betowed on me,
Love, home, and friends.
Ah, well may I, dear Lord, give thanks to Thee
Until life ends.

Not on one day alone shall praises sound
Along my way;
Each sun-spanned arch of all the year is crowned
Thanksgiving Day.

LOVE'S EVERGREEN

WHAT is the Christmas gift that I shall send,
  Belovéd friend, enshrined within my heart?
Shall silks and pearls in its embroidery blend,
  Shall it show wonders of the goldsmith's art?
Or shall I look across the fair blue lake
  And in its waves read tales so old, so new,
That with its thought the heart's quick thrill doth make
  The day more beautiful, the lake more blue?

Ah, love is written here and everywhere,
  Until it seems that all the world must read
The story that the birds and wild bees share
  And sing within the trees and on the mead.
Day pencils it on clouds in dazzling white,
  Night letters in her golden stars its name,
And never chime of bells the ear doth smite
  But still that song of songs rings out the same.

Dear friend, this is my gift for Christmastide—
  The gift of love to lock within your heart,
The gift of love to scatter far and wide
  Till it becomes of every day a part.
So may God's blessing be on holly wreath
  And in its red of clustering berries shine,
Until on skies above and earth beneath
  Sweet joy and hope are set in light divine.

Take then this gift unseen and yet most dear,
The Christmas evergreen for all love's year.

POSSESSION

MAN need not seek for joy or sweet content;
To find those treasures he was never meant.
He carries them secure within his heart,
And none can steal them, since he cannot part
With their dear presence—save when he shall say:
"I give ye up, and walk in darkened way."

PRAYER

FATHER, I long to hear Thy word,
And listening, bow.
I care not that my voice be heard,
But oh, speak Thou!
Let me espouse my comrade's cause
Till it be won;
Not coveting the world's applause,
But Thy "Well done!"
And working, may I ever sing
A song of cheer;
And loving, may I ever bring
Thy love more near.
So, losing sight of fear and strife,
Let me be now
Thy loving Child, and through my life,
Dear Lord, speak Thou!

HYMNS

I

Lord, far beyond desert of mine
The love that on my life doth shine,
That shelters me in darkest night,
And blesses every morning light.

The changing seasons round the years,
Joy brings her smiles and grief her tears;
But whether smiles or tears prevail,
Thy boundless love doth never fail.

Oh, keep my spirit undefiled!
Help me to be Thy trusting child!
And on this loving heart of mine,
Lord, let Thy love forever shine!

II

O heart of love, thou broodest o'er
  This little world of ours,
Revealed in sky, in sea, in shore,
  In forests, streams and flowers;

Yet, O thou heart of love divine!
  Until thy face I see
Reflected in this heart of mine,
  I live apart from thee.

When I love those who need love's grace,
  Not those who love deserve,
Content to take a lowly place
  And joyfully to serve,

Then will love's tide unfailing flow
From out this heart of mine;
And every hour thy grace will show,
O heart of love divine!

III

Lord we rejoice that thou dost bend
From heaven above to be our friend!
Thou draw'st the curtain of the night,
And day gives earth for our delight.

For us the mountains lift their heads,
Swift rivers flow o'er rocky beds
And torrents leap from fields of snow
To laugh in valleys green below.

Yet, Lord, beyond all other gifts,
The thought that every burden lifts,
Is that Thou dost with dear love bend
From heaven above to be our friend.

CHURCH BELLS

When long ago the church bells rang
One song to me they ever sang:
"Peace, peace on earth—to men good will!"
It rang o'er city, valley, hill—
"God is above and all is well!"
It rang in carols and in knell.
Today I hear the church bells ring;
But ah, far other words they sing.
How dare ye come in velvet here
To worship God and call him dear,
When close beside your very door
Are set the hovels of the poor!
You feast—they starve; you smile—they weep;
You dream the while they cannot sleep.
The God of Sabaoth doth heed
The cry that tells His children's need.
"I cannot hear your voice," He says,
"For wails of anguish drown your praise;
I cannot see knees bent in prayer,
For clouds of suffering fill the air.
I called to you, sick, hungry, faint,
You listened not to my complaint.
'When saw we thee,' your voices plead,
"An hungered, Lord, and did not feed?"
"Go!" saith the heavenly voice, "for ye
In slighting these have slighted me.
For inasmuch as ye have left
The least of mine of joy bereft,
Ye so have shut your Lord away
And to hell's night turned heaven's day."
The church bells ring and ring: Depart,
I know ye not, ye hard of heart!

TO CORREGGIO'S MADONNA

In the Uffizi

MADONNA, warm with adoration bending!
Mother, with love thine ardent hands extending
  Above fair Jesus on his bed of hay!
Not dearer could He be in cradle molded
By sculptor's art, or in rare purple folded;
  The world's tomorrow—He is thine today.

The darling! Other mothers see him lying
Like their own babies—smiling, sometimes sighing,
  Or dreaming of the mystic long ago.
"He's like my Guido," says fair Lucia lightly.
Thou dost not answer, but withdrawing slightly
  Ponderest the visions that they cannot know.

The sunbeams flicker, and their shafts are setting
A halo o'er His head; but in its netting
  Thy startled eyes behold the martyr crown.
To pierce thy heart its thorns are not forbidden,
Nor can the symbol from thy love be hidden;
  The secret weighs thine exultation down.

But look! The wondrous child at thee is smiling,
From eyes and heart the deadly pain beguiling;
  Forgotten now all sorrow life hath given.
See in the clouds the holy censers swinging!
Hark to the song celestial choirs are singing!
  Thy darling child is Lord of Earth and Heaven!

NINETIETH PSALM

LORD, Thou hast been our dwelling-place
Through generations past;
Before the mountains were brought forth,
While earth was chaos vast,
Thou art from everlasting known
To everlasting—God alone.

A thousand years within Thy sight
Are but as yesterday
When it is past; or like a watch
That measureth night away.
As with a flood Thou carriest them,
They are as sleep that falls on men.

Like grass are they, that flourishing
In morning hours is found;
At eventide it is cut down
And withereth on the ground.
Thine anger doth our souls consume,
Thy wrath doth fill our hearts with gloom.

Our days are three-score years and ten;
Like oft-told tale those years.
Though strength should four-score number them,
They are but work and tears;
For life is soon cut off, and then
We fly, and know not where or when.

So teach us, Lord, to count our days
That we find wisdom's heart.
Return! with mercy satisfy!
Let gladness be our part.
According to our time of fears,
May we rejoice through all our years.

Unto Thy servants' eyes, dear Lord,
  Let all Thy work appear;
Thy glory to their children show,
  That love may conquer fear.
Our handiwork do Thou make strong,
And let Thy beauty be our song.

TRUE RELIGION

God is good and He demands
Only goodness at our hands,
Nor a substitute will bless
For His children's righteousness.
Would we character attain
We must first desire its gain,
And we gladly must receive
Help from God, in Him believe.
Church's service ought to be
Not a duty whence we flee,
But the opening of the soul
Unto God's divine control.
Ritual is vain unless
It promoteth righteousness.
We serve God, and only then,
When we serve our fellow men.
To love mercy, justice do,
To walk humbly, ever true—
This keeps bright the altar fires,
This—this only—God requires.

SONG OF LABOR

Come sing the song of labor
  And sing with joyful heart,
For man to man is neighbor
  Though homes be far apart.
The future we are molding
  Prophetic as we sing,
And fruitful earth is holding
  The gifts that she will bring.

Not truly rich the idler,
  Nor poor who shoulders hod,
For poor and rich are ever
  As one in sight of God.
He sees in every creature
  The angel of His plan,
And reads in every feature
  The noble heart of man.

Come sing the song of labor,
  For each must do his part,
No use for gun or saber
  When love is in the heart.
Then friendly hands outreaching
  Shall own a brother's worth,
And give the wisest teaching—
  'Tis love that rules the earth.

ACHIEVEMENT

Let me not circumscribe my work as for myself alone,
The little *me* who dwells within this body called my own!
It is not mine, except as God has lent it to be used
In service of His children. Never let it be abused
By narrow limitation. I and mine? What are we then
But part of that great universe we call the world of men?
We think too much of self, our happiness, our pain, our grief—
As if the constellations centered in this one belief
Of our importance. Use a larger vision, and we see
How small a fraction of God's universal plan are we.
Then work! It matters not if glad or sad our course be run,
So we have helped the world's work on, our little part well done.

SONG OF WORK

THE man who toils is truly king,
  The king of work and play;
His thought is free from every sting
  That tells of idle day.

His song rings over hills and dells,
  He holds a ruler's rod;
The idle man his birthright sells,
  For work is blest of God.

When labor holds its own true place
  Controlling work and play,
Freedom 'twill give to every race
  And joy to every day.

O happy man, of work the king,
  Look up and see unfurled
The flag of freedom! Sing then, sing!
  For labor rules the world!

BROTHERHOOD

Do we scorn our fellow man?
  Then we do not know him;
We may call ourselves above,
  Yet may be below him.

When we learn his fortitude,
  Learn his human kindness,
Only then we scourge ourselves
  For our wilful blindness.

Man in masses we may scorn,
  Bitterly reproving;
When we meet him face to face,
  Then begins our loving.

LABOR SONG

MAN worked for self when earth was young
  And then he loved his own.
But feeble was the voice that sung
  That dreary monotone.

The hand that works for self grows weak,
  The tides of life run slow;
Who thrives must others' welfare seek
  And love for others show.

Today afar on prairie lands
  The farmer's arm is strong
Because the labors of his hands
  To all the world belong.

And as he cuts his golden wheat
  And sees the swathe laid down,
He sings, "The world my bread shall eat
  And love the gift shall crown."

MESSAGE OF THE FLAG

1900

My COUNTRY, your dear flag was first conceived
In love, with throbbings of a patriot heart;
With prayer that, from a tyrant yoke relieved,
That flag in tyranny should have no part.

Its red stood for the love of liberty,
Its white for purity of thought and deed;
Its stars of hope were sown to multiply
Their golden lamps on a celestial mead.

Then, when that sacred flag was first unfurled,
The cardinal winds swept out the colors new,
And floated in the face of all the world
The message of the red, the white, the blue.

"Hail! hail! oh, hail!" our patriot fathers cried,
"Hail, Freedom's symbol! Come, all ye oppressed!
Your prayer for succor shall not be denied,
Come, lay your burdens on the New World's breast!"

Ah, then they gathered from the lands afar;
Sweet joy flamed up from ashes of despair,
And like the wise men led by Bethlehem's star,
Hope's signal led them into Freedom's air.

O blesséd land, whose young arms opened wide,
Whose great heart ever gave its welcoming word!
What can it mean today that at your side
Men beg for liberty, and are not heard?

Does not that cry your early cry repeat,
  Ye pilgrims landing on a barren coast?
And can your children aid in the defeat
  Of brave men, when your courage is their boast?

Ah, men may fight with many a reason given—
  For king or queen, on gold or conquest set;
But when they fight for God and home, then Heaven
  Reloads the gun, and points the bayonet.

For life counts not, if home is to be lost;
  Through flames of fire the martyr hails his God.
Better to die a free man than at cost
  Of freedom live, a slave, a serf, a clod.

Better to die with God, than live to see
  His holy laws transgressed, His love unknown;
Better relinquish life, than live to be
  An alien, though upon earth's proudest throne.

My country, 'tis not thou! Thou art betrayed
  Most wickedly for lust of gold and power.
Rise, patriots, rise, and never be dismayed!
  Strike for your altars! 'Tis th' appointed hour!

My country, speak, but not through lips of greed,
  Say that your flag still stands for liberty;
Call to the helpless, ask not race or creed;
  But answer to their cry: "Ye shall be free!"

Great God of battles, give the wrong defeat,
  E'en though our sons upon the altar die!
Pass, smoke of cannon, turmoil of retreat,
  Cease, groans of death; hush, hush the mourner's
    sigh!

Give victory to right, and let the few
  Confuse the many who would make them slaves!
Thou God of peace, prove to the world anew
  'Tis not Thy will that men fill soldiers' graves!

My country, for your heroes take not men
  From battlefields whose hands are red with blood;
Dismount your cannon, sheathe your sword, and then
  Raise high the flag of peace on holy rood.

Take those for heroes, and their names enshrine,
  Who hear with quickened ear each cry of pain;
For whose self-sacrifice and love divine
  No human being ever cried in vain.

Blow, winds, and bear upon the wings of peace
  Your message of good-will across the sea!
Oh, say, that war in every land must cease!
  Float, flag of freedom, till the world is free!

AFTER SENECA

I

Should one bestow on us a house replete
With marbles, paintings, gildings, broideries fair,
We fain would offer thanks obsequious,
In obligation for a gift most rare.
Yet must it stand at mercy of the flood,
Fire, wind, and storm, or countless accident.
It may rise fair today, tomorrow lie
Low on the ground and eat oblivion's dust.
Yet sleep we sweet 'neath heaven's canopy,
The globe of earth the place for our repose;
The wondrous heavens spread out a spectacle
Whose glories the wide firmaments disclose.

And shall we say no word of thanks for all
Life gives beyond our power to understand?
Whence have we breath, heat, light of morn and eve?
Whence have we grains and fruits and jewelled
mines?
Whence comes the blood pulsating in our veins?
Whence have we growth and years and reason's mind?
The seed of everything is in itself;
God's blessing calls it from the dark to life—
"The work of Nature" Epicurus saith.
Why not the work of God? Name Him yourself!
Say Jupiter, Almighty, Thunderer,
Creator and Preserver. Call him Fate,
Or Bacchus, Father of us all. Or say
Great Hercules Invincible; perchance,
Wise Mercury. Look ye this way or that.
Call him by whatsoever name ye will,

Ye shall not fail to find him. He is here,
There, everywhere. He worketh day and night,
He doeth His own work and doeth well.
He giveth freely, and He looketh not
For due return.
Aye, I will call Him God,
And worshipping give ceaseless thanks to Him.
Call ye Him what ye will; I call Him God—
God of the heavens, the earth, the universe,
And God of me, who glory, giving praise
That He created me—to call Him God.

II

The great man on a precipice doth stand;
Prosperity doth hold him by the hand.
Yet let him lose but fraction of his poise,
He falls below upon oblivion's sand,
And naught is heard but echo's empty noise,
While high, unchanged, the precipice doth stand.

III

Too late comes the gift that is won by the asking,
Too costly the prize our petition is tasking;
Naught costs us so dear as what's bought by our praying,
And only for Heaven our prayers we are saying,
In secret we choose our petition to offer,
And love most the gift that the giver doth proffer.
Then give as you wish, and be blest in receiving.
Give cheerfully, quickly, no thought of retrieving;
Denying is surely next door to demurring,
And bitter's the gift that is slow in conferring.

IV

VAIN-GLORIOUS Alexander boasted oft
That none in benefits could him excel.
Then he met one who dwelt within a tub,
And, richer far than he who would compel
Acceptance of a gift, said ever: "Nay,
I am content. Naught, king, canst thou bestow;
Naught would I give to thee, so go thy way;
Such wealth as I possess thou canst not know."

V

WHAT we pursue with much hazard,
Win by our blood's expense,
Breaking with faith and with friendship—
These are but gifts of the sense.

We lose the true use of riches
When anxious to gain and to hold;
For as children cry out for apples,
So old men cry out for gold.

The children of clay make their houses,
Old men build of marble and stone,
The works of the old show no progress—
The children's mistakes are their own.

On the surface of earth God has given
To man many gifts that are good;
But iron, gold, silver are hidden,
And gained but with slaughter and blood.

A torment is money, the greater
In possession than in its pursuit.
The flower may allure with its beauty,
Yet poison may lie in its fruit.

Must the chariot of Phoebus be golden?
The best time, the golden age?
Nay! nay! 'tis a vision deceitful,
But it never deceiveth the sage.

For the man who is pushed from the highway
May be truly more happy than he
Who walketh in pride of possession,
And hiding his chains says "I'm free."

VI

MEGARA taken, then Demetrius asked
Of Stilpo: "Friend, what hast thou lost, I pray?"
"Naught," the philosopher replied, "though I
Have made my way through wreck and fire and blood,
And know not where my wife and children are,
Or where my fortune, country, friends, or home,—
Yet am I still at peace though flames destroyed
My native town—though naked I escaped.
For I have saved my goods," said he. "Justice
And courage, prudence, temperance; what more
Had I but transitory blessings,—wealth
That easily might fly within an hour?
I have saved all my goods. I have saved all!"
Thus answered Stilpo to Demetrius.

VII

I AM wise, and love to dwell
With a beggar or a prince.
One shall never make me proud;
One shall never make me wince.

I can sleep as sound and well
In a barn as in a hall;
I can lodge on bed of down
Or on hay in manger stall.

Pain and pleasure both suffice;
I might wish the game I play
Easier were to win, and yet
I accept it either way.

Were I prince imperial
I might choose to conquer, but
I would bear the selfsame mind
In my conqueror's chariot.

Easy 'tis to trample what
People covet, people fear;
Some will laugh upon the wheel,
Jest when fire the flesh doth sear.

Fortune cannot rule the man
Who is constant in his mind;
He is wise and knows no ill,
Sees where fools are ever blind.

VIII

All great men stand in noble fortitude,
In honor, and in courage, side by side.
Leonidas with his three hundred men
Would hold Thermopylae 'gainst Xerxes' force.
"Come, fellow soldiers, dine we here," said he,
"As if we in another world should sup."
Brave Caeditus before a battle said:
"We fain must go, my soldiers all, but yet
It is not needful that we should return."
When conqueror at Pharsalia, Caesar took
The cabinet of Pompey, knowing well
It held the letters that would truly tell
Who were his friends, and who his enemies;
Yet burnt it still unopened. And again
When Alexander knew base Philip's plan
To poison him, he held in his left hand
The letter of advice, and in his right
The cup he drained, while within Philip's hand
He laid the letter calmly, without word.
Thus great men stand in noble fortitude,
In honor, and in courage, side by side.

IX

Noble examples stir to noble deeds.
Be wise! withdraw thyself from evil doers.
A rocky ground will harden horses' hoofs;
Soldiers are made from hardy mountaineers;
Miners make pioneers. All discipline
The spirit fortifies. Those best instruct
Who use their lives to prove their words are true.
Bad air endangers health and worthy men

May fall through bad example. Hannibal,
Though conqueror at arms, was overcome
By pleasures and brought low. The man who bears
His foes within his breast, hath harder task
To conquer than in fight on battlefield.
If I give way to pleasure, I must yield
To labor, anger, poverty and grief.
Good company brings better thoughts than these,
And meeting with the wise delights the soul.
I will take care with whom I eat and drink,
For without friends a table is a stall.
Writing does well, but conversation's best.
Cleanthes had not drawn so true to life
Great Zeno, but by watching day and night.
Let me be careful of my company;
For I go not abroad, and home return
The selfsame man; something is discomposed,
Some passion calmed gets head, or virtue's gained.
Like bodies, minds grow tender and relapse
When they encounter airs that are impure.
Therefore with wisdom choose thy company—
Noble examples stir to noble deeds.

X

God bids us all close by His side to walk,
Not to stand facing Him as if arraigned
Before our judge, with body bending low,
But joyful, as the children of a king
Prince-like to tread at our dear father's side;
His wealth of love and peace and joy our own,
Life set to His in perfect harmony.
Thus as companions, children, helpers, friends,
Erect and glad to meet the world with Him,
Doth He invite us by His side to walk.

XI

King Archelaus bade great Socrates,
"Come to my palace there to visit me."
He answered, "Nay, for I will never take
What I cannot requite; for I am free."
Let the world judge which were the greater gift,
That of the sage, or King of Macedon!
For Archelaus needed Socrates
Who wore the laurels that his wisdom won.
The king would fain the sage's secrets know,
Would learn of life and death from his own lips,
Would win a friend. What gift with that compares?
Who gives his love, the wealth of heaven shares,
And friendship that the sage could well bestow
Left all the monarch's riches in eclipse.

QUATRAINS

I

When before Thee, Thou righteous Judge, I stand—
My deeds, both good and ill, on either hand—
Oh, summon those who love me, from earth's ends,
And then in mercy judge me by my friends.

II

When Memory, rich in treasures,
With her shining jewels plays,
Her sweetest smiles are for the gems
Set in the dear old days.

III

Joy is the oil within life's lamp,
And if it fail the light grows dim.
Whoso shall lose it soon will find
The darkness settling over him.

IV

When we do the will of God,
Little time have we
To discuss His hidden plans
For eternity.

V

THE future doth no more affright,
The past hath left me free.
Whatever I might once have been
Thank God! I yet may be.

VI

"WRITE the vision," saith the Lord;
"Speak the word—it shall be heard;
Though the vision tarry,—wait,
It will come—or soon or late."

VII

WOULD you have stars for company
While journeying far and nigh?
Then as you walk stir not the dust,
Lest it obscure the sky.

VIII

IN every virtue lies concealed
A latent vice that might have ruled.
In every vice a virtue hides
That needed only to be schooled.

IX

I AM the potter,
Life is the clay;
Shall clay mold the potter,
Or potter the clay?

X

Is there a beam in thine eye, my friend,
That once was a mote in thy brother's?
'Tis but the price thou hast heavily paid
For daring to be judge of others.

XI

As speed the ships upon the sea
Till friend clasps hand with new-found friend,
So speed the forces all that tend
To bring my unknown friend to me.

XII

THE world has less of evil than of good,
And he who trusts all men will be deceived
Less often than will he who trusts no man,
And is thereby of faith in man bereaved.

XIII

THOUGH old age walk beside us
And poverty be near,
With God for our companion
We can have naught to fear.

XIV

DID you fail? You will not be forgotten
Or helplessly thrown to the floor,
For the gods always open a window
Whenever they close a door.

XV

A LIE can run around the earth
By any road you choose,
And reach the goal, while laggard truth
Is putting on her shoes.

XVI

THE gods once gathered for breakfast,
And Ixion came nothing loth,—
But afterwards only remembered
The design of the table cloth.

XVII

"A PENNY'S worth of anything else
Is only worth a penny;
But a penny's worth of ease," he said
"Is tuppence worth, if any."

XVIII

A SECRET when it's known to two
Is secret nevermore, 'tis true;
"Yet three may keep a secret," said
Poor Richard—"but two must be dead."

XIX

"I THINK I know," said Adam,
"I know I know," said Eve.
Now say, dear sir and madam,
Which one will you believe?

PROVERBS

I

Be prompt. The tardy habit grows,
And gets a sound berating;
For people always count the faults
Of those who keep them waiting.

French

II

When God bids thee draw a load,
Rope He lays beside the road;
When He says that thou shalt ride,
Then a horse He doth provide.

Danish

III

When the web is well begun
No need then to dread
That it will be left undone;
God will send the thread.

Italian

IV

Choose your home when once you find
The best that life can bring;
In a land where all are blind,
A one-eyed man is king.

Spanish

V

Would you be fragrant? Choose a place
Where fragrance you will meet;
For he who dwells by one who sells
Sweet perfumes, will be sweet.

Arabian

VI

There is never a road that is long,
When we know at its end
Stands the house of a friend;
For the heart as it goes sings a song.

Danish

VII

Man is not just till he divines
That God writes straight on crooked lines.

Spanish

VIII

The Devil boldly walks abroad
By night and day;
But when he finds the door fast shut,
He goes away.

Spanish

IX

Two ears, one tongue—the moral seek:
To listen twice while once you speak.

Turkish

X

THE best man's faults upon his forehead written,
Would make him pull hat over eyes—shame-smitten.

Gaelic

XI

CONFIDE a secret to a man that's dumb;
'Twill make him speak, for out 'tis bound to come.

Livonian

XII

THOUGH you give a pound of fretment,
'Twill not pay a gill of debtment.

Jamaican

XIII

WHEN two friends meet with loving word,
'Tis God Himself doth make the third.

Italian

XIV

WITH God thou may'st cross the ocean,
Shore to shore;
Without Him cross not the threshold
Of thy door.

Russian

University of California
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1388
Return this material to the library
from which it was borrowed.

PS
3545
W19m

Ward -
Melody of life

PS
3545
W19m